

WY Infrastructure Authority, PacifiCorp Enter MOU for Clean Coal Plant

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PacifiCorp will pursue up to three separate feasibility studies on different clean coal power plant technologies in cooperation with the Wyoming Infrastructure Authority (WIA) to develop an integrated gasification combined-cycle (IGCC) plant near Point of Rocks, WY. The WIA's board approved a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with PacifiCorp last Wednesday.

PacifiCorp was one of the respondents to a request for proposals (RFP) issued last year by the state authority, and the MOU has taken a number of months of negotiations to formulate. WIA has \$1 billion in bonding authority available to support projects that help Wyoming more fully develop its extensive renewable energy and coal resources.

Under the agreement PacifiCorp, which operates as Rocky Mountain Power in Wyoming, Idaho and Utah, will spend up to \$2 million on the studies for a proposed plant that would draw on Wyoming's Power River Basin coal supplies. The IGCC plant as initially conceived would capture about 60% of the carbon emissions.

WIA and Wyoming governmental officials will work with the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) to obtain federal funding for what would be a demonstration project, for which DOE is charged with providing funding under the federal Energy Policy Act of 2005.

Through the three studies with potential vendors of IGCC technology and the state's tapping of potential DOE resources, Wyoming officials think they and the Portland, OR-based utility can decide at the end of this year if there is a potentially viable IGCC project to pursue. Target dates for initial operation of such a plant are focused on 2015.

Other bidders made the final round of respondents to the infrastructure authority's RFP, state officials reported; however, PacifiCorp and its parent company, MidAmerican Energy Holdings, won because of their extensive financial resources.